

Powdery Mildew

Powdery Mildew is a group of fungi with the common symptom of a grayish-white, powdery mat visible on the surface of leaves, stems, flower petals and fruit (see images). Although it is not considered fatal, continued infestation weakens the plant and can make it susceptible to other issues. People often ask the difference between Downy Mildew and Powdery Mildew (see image A, powdery mildew appears on the leaf surface, downy causes leaf discoloration).

This disease is most severe on plants in the shade or areas where there is poor air circulation. It really likes cool temperatures with high humidity, but it can be seen in warm, dry conditions and in full sun. Powdery mildew can affect many plants, but it tends to be very host specific, so mildew on your yard will not infect your viburnum.

Some common plants that can become infected would be: **Trees**; Ash, Birch, Buckeye, Elm, Linden, Maple, Oak. **Fruits**; Apple, Grape, Crabapple, Blueberry, Pecan. **Shrubs**; Lilac, Cotoneaster, Dogwood, Azalea, Crape Myrtle, Euonymus, Rhododendron, Spirea, Viburnum, Roses. **Flowers**; Phlox, Snapdragon, Dahlia, Zinnia, Delphinium.

Vegetables; Cucumber, Squash, Pumpkins, Beans, Eggplant, Lettuce, Peas, Peppers, Tomatoes. **Turf**. It infects over 1,000 types of plants.

Control

Universities suggest first to get mildew resistant varieties of plants, to me, if you have powdery mildew, it is too late for that. Next they suggest pruning and thinning plants to improve air flow and allow more sunlight into the area. Finally they say don't over fertilize causing lush growth, this is why many universities suggest fertilizing trees and shrubs in the fall after leaves drop or turn color, these nutrients are slowly used by the plant, not causing a burst of growth.

Trees, Shrubs and Flowers; **ferti•lome® Liquid Systemic Fungicide** used early on is a great preventer. **ferti•lome® F-Stop** is another systemic that is very effective on powdery mildew. Many universities suggest if the infestation is severe, alternate between products, so spray one then 2 weeks later spray the other until weather conditions improve. A non-chemical choice is **ferti•lome® "Green" Label Triple Action**.

Fruits, Berries and Vegetables; **ferti•lome® F-Stop** is the most recommended with **ferti•lome® "Green" Label Triple Action** or **ferti•lome® "Green" Label Copper Fungicide** next. Again, under heavy pressure choose two and alternate.

Turf; **ferti•lome® F-Stop Granules** is the strongest fungicide available to homeowners so this is a great choice. If applied early enough, one application will be enough. If infestation is heavy, alternate with **ferti•lome® Liquid Systemic Fungicide**.

